The National Archives of India has a small Microfilm Unit which undertakes microfilming of only such records as are considered to be of national importance and in which the Department itself is interested.

Proceedings

Dr. Prasad informed the members about the very limited capacity of the Microfilming Unit of the National Archives of India and the great difficulties in the proposed extension of microfilming services to the Universities and Learned Institutions. In the light of the clarification, Prof. Bhatnagar agreed to withdraw the resolution.

(16) Access to scholars to pre-1925 records relating to Kashmir in the National Archives of India

Resolution by Shri F.M.Hassnain

The Commission resolves that all pre-1925 records relating to Kashmir, in the custody of the National Archives of India, be thrown open for research to all bonafide Research Scholars without any restriction.

Explanatory Note

The issue regarding throwing open of Kashmir records was taken up by the Archival Legislation Committee, which recommended that, as all Kashmir records were open for research without any restriction at London and Lahore, there was no necessity to keep them sealed at the National Archives of India.

Secretary's Note

The observations of the Committee on Archival Legislation (1960) were as follows:

> "As regards the records relating to Kashmir the present restrictions are based upon some misunderstanding. The fact is that the Government do not have a separate series of records relating to

Kashmir. The so-called Kashmir records really consist of correspondence which passed between the Political Officer in charge of Kashmir on the one hand and the Supreme Government on the other, and these are recorded along with similar correspondence relating to other States in India in the same volumes of official proceedings. Thus to put a ban on the use of the Kashmir records is virtually to prevent the use of any records of the late Foreign and Political Department, which cannot certainly be the intention of the Government of India.

Even if it be the intention to screen all materials relating to Kashmir irrespective of any chronological limit, it is not clear how that intention is going to be realised. Political relations with the State of Jammu and Kashmir used to be conducted by the Government of India through the agency of the Punjab Government from 1849 to 1877 when the Political charge was transferred to a Special Officer (designated since 1885 'Resident at Kashmir'). Thus a full set of all pre-1878 records relating to Kashmir are available among the Punjab records located in Lahore. Moreover, the India Office (Commonwealth Relations Office) has in its custody a complete set of Foreign and Political Department Proceedings which embody almost every document on Kashmir that Government of India may have in their possession relating to the period before 1947. There are no possible means by which access to these records in London or Lahore can be prevented." (Para 82).

According to the National Archives of India Historical Research Rules, the records of the Government of India relating to Kashmir upto 1913 only are open for research at present.

Proceedings

The resolution was formally moved by Shri Hussnain, Shri Basu, Director, Historical Division, Ministry of External Affairs explained that these restrictions were also applicable to the records of other frontier regions as well as

Nepal and Bhutan etc. However, the Ministry of External Affairs have been granting access to scholars on individual requests. After some discussions, the following resolution was passed:

> Resolution X. The Commission suggests that all pre-1925 records relating to Kashmir, in the custody of the National Archives of India, be thrown open for research to all bonafide research scholars without any restrictions.

(17) Publication in a consolidated form of all the papers published in the Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission

Resolution by Shri S.C.De.

Resolved that research papers published in the proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission be compiled and published on chronological basis for the benefit of Research Scholars.

Explanatory Note

A large number of research papers have been read in different sessions of the Indian Historical Records Commission and published in the Proceedings. These papers throw new light on many aspects of history which need to be modified on the basis of them. Since a few scholars have the opportunity to see proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission, they can not be benefitted by these research papers. But if the research papers are compiled chronoligically and regionwise and published in one or more volumes, it would be easy for scholars to utilise them for their research purposes. The Indian History Congress have already brought out such volumes, and they are found very useful and handy for reference.